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ABSTRACT

This paper examines online corporate university artifacts to bring to light additive definitions of literacy. Rhetorical analysis in the paper shows four claims made about literacy in the corporate university artifacts: literacy is knowing the corporate culture; literacy provides immediate and quantifiable benefits; literacy is easily accessible and comprehensible; and corporate literacy is globally transferable. The paper explains that underlying these four claims are four warrants: the corporate culture is a content area upon which to teach, assess, and build an educational end-product; immediate and quantifiable benefits, often in the form of wages or profits to an individual or corporation constitute literacy mastery; immediate accessibility and comprehensibility is to be valued over long-term or reflective and critical practice; and, corporate university training programs provide literacy that can be transferred and applied to other local or global corporations or situations. For the paper, artifacts were collected from online sites of Motorola, Disney, McDonald's and Super 8 Motels, hardcopy texts, and secondary sources, and include phone interviews with corporate university representatives. While postmodern sensibility seems to hail the death of the single proprietary author, discussions with corporate representatives for this paper suggest that at least some corporations firmly retain their rights to corporate authorship. The artifacts of emerging literacy of corporate universities are described in the paper and then analyzed to better understand messages implicit about what constitutes literacy. Sources for the paper include academic and rhetorical authorities, along with writers and theorists for the business sphere. (Contains 23 references.) Appended is the "University of Pineapple Canon." (NKA)

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From the Classroom to the Cubicle: Reading the Rhetoric of the Emerging Corporate University.

by Katherine V. Wills

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International Reading Association Convention in New Orleans, (April 29-May 4, 2001)

Katherine V. Wills

"From the Classroom to the Cubicle: Reading the Rhetoric of the Emerging Corporate University,"

Introduction

This paper examines online corporate university artifacts order to bring to light additive definitions of literacy. A rhetorical analysis shows four claims made about literacy in the corporate university artifacts: literacy is knowing the corporate culture; literacy provides immediate and quantifiable benefits; literacy is easily accessible and comprehensible; and corporate literacy is globally transferable. Underlying these four claims are four warrants: the corporate culture is a content area upon which to teach, assess, and build an educational end-product; immediate and quantifiable benefits, often in the form of wages or profits to an individual or corporate constitute literacy mastery; immediate accessibility and comprehensibility is to be valued over long-term or reflective and critical practice; and, corporate university training programs provide literacy that can be transferred and applied to other local or global corporations or situations. Artifacts were collected from online sources, hardcopy texts, and secondary sources. Also, phone interviews with corporate university representatives are included. While postmodern sensibility seems to hail the death of the single proprietary author, discussions with corporate representatives for this article suggest that at least some corporations firmly retain their rights to corporate authorship. Academic administrators and businesses vigorously continue to partner with each other; authorship in the corporate university takes on a new dimension. The artifacts of emerging literacy of corporate universities are described and then analyzed in order to better understand messages implicit about what constitutes literacy.

Sources for this paper include academic and rhetorical authorities, along with writers and theorists from the business sphere. Proceeding from the belief that the corporate university is an emerging literacy with its own authorities, this paper combines academic voices from the field of composition with those writing emerging literacies to share the textual authority for the production

of literacy. As Ellen Barton observed in her 1997 *College English* article, "Literacy in (Inter)Action," [L]iteracy focuses on the uses reading and writing in educational settings (409). Barton notes that while literacy might be "foregrounded" within English studies in traditional classrooms, literacy is "backgrounded" in contexts other than schools. The corporate university is a one of these "backgrounds". Corporate literacy is the product of a social rhetorical system, not as classical or psychological system (Ehninger). Emerging corporate rhetoric transmits values much as the rhetoric systems of Whatley, Blair and Campbell. However, the rhetoricians who propose how to read and value communication and culture might be named Tommy Hilfiger or any other corporate identity.

Rhetorical voices for this paper include Jeannie C. Meister and others from outside traditional academic disciplines. We should entertain the idea that emergent literacies are based in powerful, multi-national corporate voices. We should not assume that traditional academic sources will only constitute the authority of literacy, knowledge, and culture. Literacy is already being created and reintroduced into traditional academic setting by way of business-driven demands. It is time, perhaps, to consider the effects of partnering literacy's authority.

"Literacy looms as one of the great engines of profit and competitive advantage in the 20th century: a lubricant for consumer desire; a means for integrating corporate markets; a foundation for the deployment of weapons and other technology; a raw material for the mass production of information," states Deborah Brandt in the 1998 *College Communication and Composition article* "Sponsors of Literacy". Brandlt revisions literacy as an economic tool through which adults sponsor other adults in their literacy. Corporate universities increasing appropriate literacy sponsorship in the form of and training programs named 'corporate universities' (166). The business of literacy as defined by corporate universities has yet to be critically examined. Corporations, towards their goals to sustain fiscal viability, create literacy and the educational product. It should not be assumed that the literacy lessons of corporate universities remain discrete from traditional academic institutions and objectives, students, parents, or society. Indeed, the commodification of education, the perception of the primary

credentialling function of education by many students can be seen as echoing the claims of corporate universities.

Before examining the corporate university artifacts, their claims and warrants, it is important to attempt define corporate university and to situate emerging corporate university literacy. Why do corporations such as Microsoft, McDonald's Hamburger U., Disney, Motel 8 and the University of Pineapple, and Motorola label themselves as 'corporate universities'? Toward what ends do corporate universities create literacy out of corporate culture? How does literacy in the form of corporate training to meet initiative- or economically-driven objectives of corporate expediency, compare to the definitions of literacy as defined by E.D. Hirsh's canon or Martha Nussbaum's vision of a liberal education for world citizens? How is literacy being redefined in these artifacts?

Defining a University

Why have corporations labeled themselves as "corporate universities" rather than just training programs? Using the term "corporate university" is crucial to the valorization necessary for corporate literacy to be rhetorically and fiscally effective with corporate clients. Corporations wish to align themselves linguistically with cachet of the academic identity. Corporations can ameliorate any pejorative links to a marginalized corporate literacy product or business fads and jargon. Jeannie C. Meister, author of numerous texts on corporate universities, and president of Corporate University Xchange, Inc., a New York city-based corporate education consulting firm, extensively tracks the naming and evolution of corporate universities. In her two seminal texts on corporate universities, *Corporate Universities: Lessons in Building a World-Class Workforce* and *Quality Corporate Universities*, Meister states, "The name *University* creates an ideal avenue to communicate with the universities of higher education. This is what many Corporate Quality Universities are doing," (46 CQU). Meister notes the growth of the number of corporate universities from 400 to over 1000 between 1986 to 1998.

Corporate universities served the needs of business to "achieve tighter control and ownership over the learning process by more closely linking learning programs to real business

goals and strategies," (ix *CU*). Corporations seek to educate their employee/students because of what Meister calls the "shortened shelf-live of knowledge" and the need of corporations to re-tool their employees (*CU* ix). It is unlikely that corporate universities as education purveyors will diminish in number and importance in the future. Corporate universities have adopted the language and rituals of academic universities such as granting degrees, graduation ceremonies, registrar's offices, course catalogs. The proliferation of nomenclature of academic learning will continue to be used by corporate universities as partnering continues.

Meister's definition of a corporate university differs from that of Ken Bardach, associate dean and director of executive education at Northwestern University's Kellogg Graduate School of Management. Barduch suggests that the term university may be a misnomer when applied to corporate training programs. "These organizations are not generating new knowledge," (5). James Baughman, director of J.P. Morgan Leadership and Organizational Development and a former Harvard professor, questions whether the word university should even be used in relation to company schools: "To use the word 'university' to describe this thing is just a total misuse of the word. A university is a degree-granting institution, it is multi-disciplined, it has research-generating knowledge." (5). In part, corporations use the term university to accrue positive intellectual connotations for their training product. Corporations do produce new knowledge in the form of research. They produce emerging literacy in the form of their own corporate culture. Corporations use the term "university" because of affiliations with institutions of higher learning (also corporations) that participate with private corporations in corporate training. Corporate universities, whether virtual or bricks and mortar, are primarily highly-specialized training programs designed to meet fiscal, short term goals of corporations. Meeting these goals can range from training employees in blueprint reading of one or two machines, to the global promulgation of a corporate ethos.

When attempting to define corporate universities at the linguistic level, Julie L. Nicklin, in the *Chronicle of Higher Education,* makes distinctions between corporate and business end-goals. An example of corporate influence on the academy has been increased use of corporate buzzwords, says Nicklin. Total Quality Management (TQM) involves working together as teams,

outsourcing is hiring companies to perform tasks, reengineering is rethinking and redesigning processes or programs. She refers her readers to an observation made by George C. Keller, a retired scholar in higher education. He observed that while Total Quality Management worked for business situations, it did not thrive in academic settings, "because there is so much ambiguity about which customers colleges should aim to please: students, professors, taxpayers, parents, or their graduates' prospective employers. The lessons that colleges can learn from corporations are limited and should be used only as a starting point," (A34).

At the functional level, William King, as professor of the Katz School of Business at University of Pittsburgh, delineated between academic programs that should focus on long-term and broader issues than the day-to-day concerns of businesses. "The goal is to make better thinkers, problem-solvers, and decision-makers. It isn't to train students in the latest management fad or technology," said King (99 as quoted in LaPlante). King sees several risks inherent in a blending of the two institutional styles. First, the synergy and tension that exists between academic and business interests stimulates thought. Second, businesses should focus on what they do best, products and services; becoming educators may harm the vision of companies. The risk to universities is that they will sell-out to pressures for increased revenues and visibility. "Corporate people usually want training and education on things that are directly relevant and immediately applicable, " says King. "Academic programs aren't necessarily good at doing that, and they shouldn't have that as their primary focus," (99 LaPlante).

While academic universities are held more accountable for the outcomes of their students and their literacy product, corporate universities often admit the limited sphere of influence of their literacy experience. Kevin B. Wheeler in *Corporate Review* writes of the limitations of outcomes students/employees can expect from the corporate university learning experience: "There are no guarantees or even promises of promotion or pay raises after completion of the degree, although that does happen. We frame the degree completion as a step toward building more comprehensive and effective skills for staying employed," (5 Wheeler). This perception is often at odds with what corporate university literacy implies it can achieve for its students, however it is defined.

The equivalency or even superiority of corporate university training is often implied in artifacts. These literacy views permeate larger cultural views of what it means to be a literate student or person in culture at large. Thus, we might have the students who demand commodified education for their tuition dollar. Brandt points out in her 1995 article "Accumulating Literacy: Writing and Learning to Write in the Twentieth Century" that ruling institutions control literacy and its uses in order to control populations. "...the means and materials through which people acquire literacy (or are excluded from it) will always be an expression in some way of the prevailing ideological climate," (654). The values expressed in corporate university artifacts are so pervasive that it is difficult to isolate emerging corporate literacy from any other literacy in order to examine it.

Topos and Kairos

It that should not be surprising, then, to see corporate universities developing literacies during this time and location of global commerce as a way to democratize education. As global capitalism evolves, literacy expands to fulfill the rhetorical role of educating students and clients. In "Literacy, Technology, and Monopoly Capital", Richard Ohmann notes the ties between the rise of competitive capitalism at the turn of the century and the need to link literacy with business concerns: "By coincidence—or maybe not—the term 'literacy' came into use roughly at the beginning of the epoch of monopoly capital," (677-78). Literacy and capital united towards a cultural goal are not unique, but iterative. The rhetoric continues to shape expectations in/of higher education.

In theory, Meister describes the motivating forces of corporate universities as providing a more and better access to those seeking education: "The workplace is undergoing change at an accelerating rate. One of the most far-reaching changes in the evolution of the organization into a form far more fundamentally different from that which dominated industry during the 1950s and 1966s. Corporations are opting for a flat, flexible organization, characterized by decentralized decision-making, " (QCU 1). Instead of using hierarchical structures, corporations use literacy and training programs to flatten or democratize educational options. This move can be seen as

accurate when corporate universities compare their willingness to educate corporate employees, instead of just the internal professional positions that were previously the focus or corporate training programs beginning with GE. However, if the lens with which educational corporations are viewed changes, one sees that this hierarchical corporate structure mitigated by corporate universities only *within* their corporations. No longer is only the executive or professional staff being retrained, but all employees and even prospective employees. The claim of the democratizing of education options is valid within a narrowly prescribed context.

Only employees who absorbed targeted, corporation-specific information as part of an educational or literacy experience, are literate in the final assessment of the corporate. The goals for literacy of corporate universities can be compared to creation of the corporate town of Pullman, Illinois, at the turn of the century to produce the necessary kind of worker. Complaints by business today of the failure of traditional schools to meet the needs of business are not new. Corporate desire to create a para-scholastic systems to supplement public schooling has been a business goal for a least a century.

19th Century Proto-corporate Education

Patterns of corporate planning to create proto-corporate literacy can be traced to the 19th century businessman and entrepreneur George M. Pullman, founder of Pullman Palace Car Company and the corporate town of Pullman, Illinois. Pullman created a proto-corporate cultural (and literacy) model in order to solve pressing business concerns of his time. His primary concerns were uninterrupted business process and securing a steady workforce. Transience (read: retention in today's jargon) affected profitability. Pullman built Pullman, Illinois, a town in which employees could rent their living space, acquire schooling, and community from Pullman company thus assuring employee retention and stability for his company. In addition to solving immediate problems of employee permanence, Pullman saw that he could direct the educational and even spiritual activities of his employees. His motives were to solve immediate business problems. He created educational programs and literacy to better *control* his business. "We also desired to establish the place on such a basis as would exclude all baneful influences, believing

that such a policy would result in the greatest measure of success from a commercial point of view," testified Pullman in the United States Commission's Report on the Chicago Strike (26 Pullman as quoted in Cobb). Baneful influences included alcohol, broken families, transience and a host of problems inhibiting the smooth operation of a business. Author Cobb, in his examination of the Pullman community and strike, contextualized Pullman's comments: "Accompanying the thesis that such a model town would enhance the character of the worker...while it also brought the company a profit, Pullman was implementing a rather silent but potent means of social control," (27-28 Cobb). Children of his workers were encouraged to be better human beings so that they could best serve the company human capital. Pullman community was heralded as being "only the beginning of an education of the highest faculties, and better things will be seen in the children," (Smith 201). Initially, when Pullman established his corporate community, it was heralded as success of corporate, academic, and social collaboration.

The rhetoric of contemporary corporate universities carries many of the same aspirations for its employees and operates out of similar motives. While Pullman's influence was limited to a town outside of Chicago, the corporation may presumably offer employees a multi-national backyard. While Pullman's influence was ultimately injured by its own consumption of employees and the eventual Pullman Strike of May 10, contemporary employees may simply move onto the next corporation. While many students or employees today choose to see corporate university literacy and education as an extension of academic literacy, serious differences in the forces that conceived corporate universities exist.

Corporate Artifacts

Corporate university artifacts were gathered and research conducted primarily from online sites of Motorola, Disney, McDonald's, and Super 8 Motels. Secondary source material on corporate university, interviews, and non-corporate university site of Wal-Mart contributed to the rhetorical analysis of emerging literacy in this paper. The analysis of the Disney corporate university , as this paper explains, artifacts remains elusive. Representatives of Disney refused

any inquiry or research into the proprietary information of Disney University. Artifacts from Wal-Mart, which does not have a corporate university by does use oral rhetoric to educate its employees in the corporate literacy, are reviewed.

Artifacts show that corporations through the corporate universities serve as a "background" literacy. Overall, the corporate universities make these claims: the culture of the corporation is cultural literacy; corporate literacy lessons provide immediate and quantifiable benefits; literacy is easily accessible and comprehensible; and, corporate literacy provides globally transferable skills.

Motorola

Sue Jones, author of *Developing a Learning Culture,* analyzed the impetus for Motorola's corporate educational investment. In 1979, Motorola recognized a growing lack of product quality. The Dean of Motorola University reminisced:

> We decided, oh, what we need to do is train middle managers and all the operators and key individuals. We wasted 7 million on that...the company's future depended on a fundamental change in traditional mass production working culture to one built around teams...Skills were suddenly vital, and the company embarked on a massive education and training program costing 127 million by the early 1990...the corporate vice-president observed how employees are now really excited and turned on by their work, and so work harder (23 Jones).

According to Jones, this use of corporate culture and literacy tools to motivate employees has been is a success for all involved at Motorola. The student/employee may lack the ability to transfer skills per job or corporation, creativity in like circumstance, and the ability to extend skills to cope with changes in technologies (Jones 97). Diminishing corporate profits fueled literacy and corporate cultural programs at Motorola.

Motorola University's online site has not changed in its objectives much since Jones first described it (http://mu.motorola.com/). The Motorola corporate university homepage welcomes visitors to a logo page with the Motorola University motto "Worldwide solutions to help you

achieve sustainable business performance improvement." The six logos link to pages on Learning Services, Custom Learning Design, Community Connections, Books, Creative Solutions, and the Black Belt Program,. On the Community Connection page, Motorola University states its educational mission: "to serve a catalyst to create a systemic transformation of learning and teaching... establish global alliances with pre K-16 school systems, the private sector, and not-for-profit organizations committed to lifelong learning. The outcome will be learners who graduate competencies are equal to or greater than the entry level skill, behaviour, and attitude requirements or Motorola, our customers, and our suppliers." Motorola's seeks to educate not only corporate university students in Motorola's literacy, but elementary and secondary school children.

Under the Learning Services logo, corporate students can register for courses that are a "vital part of Motorola's quality culture". The page emphasizes that student/clients can "get all your questions answered." In Creative Solutions, the text emphasizes the ability of Motorola's program to build a "quality culture," satisfy customers and provide expert consultants with experience in Motorola or other global organizations. "This form of consulting extends beyond the classroom to help your organization gain a distinctive competitive edge," states the site. Implicit in this site is the belief that knowing Motorola culture makes one literate in the business world beyond purely academic study. This is a site of answers to answerable and answered questions. The inquiry is complete.

The Book logo links to suggested reading such as Jonathan Kozol's *Savage Inequalities*, an expose of America's public education system, *The Dance of Change: Challenges of Sustaining Momentum in a Learning Organization*, and the *Man Who Listens to Horses* by Monty Roberts. Roberts discusses the life lessons he learned while learning nonverbal communication from horses.

The strength of Motorola University is that it can provide customized, licensed training programs not only to Motorola employees, but to external organizations and audiences. Motorola's literacy is immediately applicable to corporate needs and is driven by the positive cultural ethos of Motorola.

Disney

Meister details the larger cultural aspirations of Disney University as it was launched in 1963 to train all Disney employees. Employees the language of Disneyese are known as cast members. Disney University offers "Disney I", a day-and-a-half program that prepares cast members to deliver customer service. These new recruits learn the language and traditions of Disney before they learn their specific jobs (79 CQU). Courses that introduce the Disney culture include everything from the client-centered Disney-MGM Studios Youth Education Series (Y.E.S.) programs for K-12. *Lights! Camera! Education! :a* 31/2 hour tour of movie and television production to *The Disney Approach to Business and Management* employee series.

I researched the Disney University Online site in the middle of April 2000. One site serves Disney students with a message board, community, and reunion information. The site had few messages and showed little activity. It had not been updated within the year. I contacted Nina McGuire (affiliation) at Disney University headquarters in (City) Florida. I informed her of my desire to find out about Disney University for my research and readers. She questioned me about my academic project. She mentioned that a Disney employee had written an academic document on Disney corporate university' "Well, we smiled," she said. I asked her if she could fax to me information available to the general public (Mission Statements, advertising) about Disney University. She said, "No, I don't think so. I don't think we will do that." She said she needed to discuss my request with her superiors. I thanked her and said I would await her superiors' final response. She did not respond to me in one week. I called McGuire back and left a voice-mail message that said I planned to write my research results anyway and I would like to include some background on Disney. I preferred not to report that Disney University refused to supply any support for my academic inquiry into the literacy artifacts of Disney University. McGuire replied to me by phone within two days and said that Disney University material was proprietary information and she could not supply anything for my research. I thanked her and said I understood.

This (non)transaction is important in that it highlights Disney corporate university as propriety and exclusive literacy. While other corporate universities, for the most part, encouraged inquiry into their training programs, Disney protected its literacy. The exclusivity, it is assumed, is not to the familiar race, gender, class barriers; rather, the emerging literacy of Disney as taught in its university is open only to those who commit to corporate cultural education. This literacy takes on a cult-like quality. The cult-like quality continues to be examined in nationally annual Disney conferences.

I noticed an ironic coincidence during my inquiry into the online Disney sites. Between the time I talked to Ms. McGuire and I mentioned I had viewed the Disney online alumni site, the site was shut down for repairs. A new and improved site is to be expected in the future. The site had not been updated before my inquiries for at least a year.

McDonald's

McDonald's Corporate University and Super 8 University of Pineapple primarily educate the in-house employees and franchisees in the management and corporate training programs. Bill Whitman at Oakbrook, Illinois, McDonald's world headquarters, said that artifacts, other than the Web Site were not available to the public because most of the training is for McDonald's employees only. Even though McDonald's has global internet facilities, the purpose of the corporate university artifacts is to educate the best possible management staff and ensure students that their skills are valuable beyond Hamburger U's sphere. All corporate universities emphasize the qualities of customer service and teamwork within the corporate culture. Here is text from the online Website explaining McDonald's global applicability of skills:

> At McDonald's, a job is never just a job. Both employees of McDonald's Corporation and employees of McDonald's Independent Franchisees know that working at a McDonald's restaurant provides them with a wealth of experience and skills, including: The experience and skills employees gain at McDonald's restaurants can take them places: from hourly crew to restaurant management...to middle management... to careers beyond, in just about any field of work anywhere.

(http://www.mcdonalds.com/careers/hambuniv/index.html)

The McDonald's site emphasizes corporate values on its history page. founder Ray Kroc cleans the parking lot of the first McDonald's as the caption reads: "'If you've got time to lean, you've got time to clean,' Ray Kroc preached to his troops. Heeding his own words, here the Chairman of the Board cleans the parking lot of the first McDonald's franchise in Des Plaines, Illinois." The work ethos, simplicity, and humility are emphasized.

International recognition is key to the corporate literacy. A reader of McDonald's corporate university should be aware that the message is to be recognized around the world for being fun. "Ronald McDonald, in any language he means 'fun.' 'The smile known around the world,' Ronald McDonald is second only to Santa Claus in terms of recognition. In his first TV appearance in 1963 the happy clown was portrayed by none other than Willard Scott. Check out McDonaldland for more Ronald McDonald information and fun. "

The semiotic of the McDonald's golden arches is explained and contextualized as architect Fred Turner and Ray Kroc view blueprints: "Here Ray Kroc (right) and Fred Turner study the design which would replace the red and white tile buildings that had become landmarks throughout the U.S. Called Kroc's first "grill man extraordinaire," Turner is today Senior Chairman of the Board."

Moral instruction is implicit in the all the corporate university artifacts. Just as the fabalist, Aesop, instructed morally, or as eighteenth and nineteenth rhetoricians through their essays prescribed their own moral instruction, the rhetoric of the corporate universities impacts on the imagination of readers. Meister emphasizes the cultural dimension of education by corporations in *Quality Corporate Universities*: "The goal is similar across many companies, to inculcate all levels of employees... in the culture and values that make the organization a unique and special place and them specifically define behaviors which enable employees to 'live the values,'" (39).

Super 8 University of Pineapple

Wood, brass, or even real pineapples (depending on the location) have historically been placed on the inns of doors to greet road-weary travelers and sailors. The tradition continues

today in the form of brass pineapple-shaped doorknockers. From this sign of welcome, Super 8 Motels, a global motel franchise draws its title, the University of Pineapple. This Web Site primarily serves a gateway to prospective franchisees who want training in the hotel operations and administration. The site offers extensive text and background with a red and white color scheme, logo, and no graphics. The university assists franchisees to have a competitive market edge through training.

A high profile university-like education is crucial to the comfortable and successful retention and training of new motel owners. "In the franchise business, training should be something that is considered as added value by the individual franchisee, in addition to the brand name he or she is buying into," states the site.

"The University of Pineapple must be an important factor in maintaining what Super 8 already has, which is consistent quality...If we maintain our role in this quality process, then we can continue to see this benefit to new Super 8 franchisees. We are asking them to invest a lot of money, and they should expect some kind of return,"
(http://www.traininguniversity.com/magazine/sep_oct96/super8.html).

Much like George Pullman's corporate town, corporations recognize education as crucial to attracting clients and sustaining profitability. The literacy from idea of the simulacrum of a university education of world caliber is a powerful selling tool. Organizational education provides the corporation with more sustainable profits, trained franchisees, and marketablity. The relates that franchisees want customized training specific to Super 8, off-the-shelf education. The perception of customized, not general or liberal education, is key to the development of corporate universities.

University of Pineapple's course, however, directs franchisees through a program modeled on traditional academic institutions, not training programs. Students receive move through a degree program of Bachelors 8, MB8, Ph8. Freshman orientation is a 4 day 'enculturation' session ($250) "that stresses the history of Super 8, its strengths and the standards that the company expects new franchisees to meet." Franchisees are introduced to

the canon, the Eight Points of the Pineapple (see Appendix A). The Motel 8 'canon' focuses on customer service and right attitude that if applied correctly will lead to profitability.

Wal-Mart

While Wal-Mart does not have an official corporate university at this time, it encourages the inculcation of corporate culture through multi-lingual jingles that harkens back to oral rhetoric. The Wal-Mart cheer is a rhetorical tool for the teaching and reading of corporate culture. The cheer, to be sung by employees worldwide, goes as follows:

Give me a W...W

Give me an A...A

Give me L...L

Give me a Squiggly (here everyone does the twist)

Give me an M...M

Give me an A...A

Give me an R...R

Give me a T...T

What's that spell?

Wal-Mart

I can't here you!

Wal-Mart!

Who's number one?

The cheer can be found online in French, Spanish, and Portuguese on the Wal-Mart site in a page titled "Culture Stories" http://www.walmart.com/estore/about/about3.jsp. It is chanted globally to show pride in Wal-Mart. This artifact is just one way that corporations express and reinforce cultural corporate literacy lessons. Participation in corporate literacy the taking of a pledge as implemented by founder Sam. This pledge is what we now call our "10-foot attitude," and it was something Sam had practiced since childhood. He was always ambitious and competitive, and by the time he reached college at the University of Missouri in Columbia, Sam decided he wanted to be president of the

university student body." Target University reinforces the 3 F's of its managerial program: fast, fun, and friendly with mnemonic and oral tradition tools of alliteration (Management Review Watson 51).

Whether looking at corporate universities as emerging literacies have expanded the traditional concept of the university. A review of the online sites reveals that corporate universities have, with technological advances, expanded the definition of a university. The campus expands beyond the physical campus and even country borders, and the curriculum is customized and adaptable. Emerging corporate literacies while claiming global applications, remain narrow in content and applicability.

Continued liaisons between academic and corporate institution will increase due to perceived shrinkage of market share of students and emphasis on head-count quotas in university registrars and accounting offices. For-profit corporations will demand more influence with academic institutions and will intensify their educational endeavors to produce employee/students who most efficiently and economically serve fiscal realities.

Teaching to the Corporation

By teaching to the corporation, literacy changes from what every American should know to what every American doesn't need to know. This emerging literacy reshapes in the public imaginary what is needed to be educated and literate in this company at this time in this economic cycle, and by extension, in this culture. Corporate universities do not concern themselves with the term "literacy" or rhetoric". Nonetheless they produce in the minds of their employee/students a literacy experience through corporate rhetoric. Culture becomes not the dead white male European's canon, or even the multicultural global canon, but the canon of the culture of corporate consumerism. Literacy becomes knowing how to purchase or what to where this season in the markets. Is designer Tommy Hilfiger more correct than Nautica? The effects of literacy and education as consumer product have already been anecdotally catalogued in academic circles. Students expect a degree for their money, not for merit. Knowledge is short-

lived, as Meister has informed us. Emerging corporate literacy influences the expectations of education and what it means to be a literate person.

End

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Appendix A, University of Pineapple "Canon"

- People: Treat your people with great hospitality and they will treat your guests in a like manner.

- Planning: Have clear, purposeful goals and objectives. Communicate your goals and create a powerful vision.
- Product: Create a quality environment that is consistently clean, friendly, well-maintained and economically priced.
- Performance: Set high standards and inspect what you expect.
- Praise: immediately reward and reinforce good performance.
- Passion: Love what you do. Have fun and let it show.
- Profit: If the first six points are met, profits will follow. Keeping your eye only on the bottom line is like watching the scoreboard instead of the ball.
- Pineapple: Pineapple Hospitality is the magic at Super 8 that makes it all work.